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Senator Hoar and Protection

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The continued demand for copies of these letters, and the writer's inability to supply the newspapers in which they appeared, are the reasons for reprinting them in pamphlet form. As they pertain to principles, their reasoning is not affected by the political changes since their publication.

The first letter concerns itself with the specious argument that wages are raised by protective taxes. The second treats of the ethical grounds on which free trade rests, and appeals to the feeling of human brotherhood against national selfishness. The third letter, and the extract from the recent address in Worcester County, as well, are intended to puncture the hollow pretence that human slavery and free trade are natural allies.

While failing of their purpose to reach the convictions of the distinguished senator to whom they were addressed, the writer is comforted with the assurance that other minds, less influenced by party considerations, have thereby been opened to the universal truths which he has aimed to convey.

WM. LLOYD GARRISON.

BOSTON, Feb. 9, 1895.

SENATOR HOAR AND PROTECTION.

POINTS FOR SENATOR HOAR.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.— CAN PEOPLE BE MADE RICHER BY TAXATION?— EXPLANATIONS WANTED FOR A SEEMING INCONSISTENCY.

[*Boston Herald*, Dec. 14, 1887.]

HON. GEORGE F. HOAR:

Dear Sir,— As a humble constituent, who rejoiced when Massachusetts honored herself by placing you in the Senate of the United States, I take the liberty of addressing you in reference to the important political question now pending. Bred in the principles to which the Republican party will owe its immortality, and proud of its traditions, I recognize in you its worthy exponent. And if, at times, your utterances seem perplexing and partisan, there are occasions when you rise to higher considerations, requiring independence and courage characteristic of a family whose services to the State and to the country are proud historical possessions. A philanthropist by nature, with sympathies which embrace the illegally disfranchised freedman of the South, as well as the outraged Indian, alive to the cause of woman in her struggle for political rights, the friend of temperance and social order, you stand upon a plane above the ordinary office-holder. The humanity of your public appeals and the eloquence and pathos with which you have championed the unfortunate and down-trodden are familiar to Massachusetts ears.

All the more inexplicable, therefore, is your attitude upon the absorbing topic of protection, which is now to divide the country. A lover of freedom, you identify yourself with the oppressors of the poor. A friend of peace, who would hail the day of universal brotherhood, you foster a system that makes enemies of nations

and compels the barbarism of iron-clads and forts. It cannot be designedly that you throw your influence on the side of monopoly and injustice. Some grievous misunderstanding exists; and that the reasons may be made plain to us, who have followed and honored you, is the purpose of this letter of honest inquiry. Your campaign speeches during the last four years, in which you incidentally touch upon the question of removing the war taxes, abound in strange utterances the moment you approach the economic theme. Instead of the luminous and convincing array of facts and logic you are accustomed to adduce, your speech glides into generalities, and your sarcasm excites a laugh in the unthinking, while it makes the judicious grieve. It is the explanation which your speeches lack that I solicit.

It cannot be a matter of debate whether the industrial development of this country is due to the tariff tax. Such is the assumption of the protectionists. On the other hand, there are not wanting intelligent students and observers who declare that this same tax has been a hindrance to its healthy growth. As neither view can be demonstrated by facts, no argument upon a matter of opinion can be of moment. But, when you join in the ever and oft-repeated assertion that the tariff protects American labor, and that with free trade the laborer would sink to the level of European workmen because of diminished wages, you assume a grave responsibility, amazing to unbiassed investigators, at variance with experience and with all recognized authorities upon the subject. In behalf of many who are unable to see how taxing poor people enriches them, let me ask you to clear away some obstacles which hamper us. We read and listen to your affirmation, and endeavor to reconcile your theory with the actual facts. If free trade or the removal of the tax from foreign products or manufactures tends to degrade labor, no wonder that it is abhorrent to the public mind. To verify the truth of the proposition, we naturally look to Great Britain, where the famous battle for commercial freedom was fought and won in the memorable years from 1840-46. The historians all agree regarding the suffering and destitution of the laboring classes under protection. Miss Martineau's graphic and harrowing picture of their distress is too familiar to need quotation.

The same fears that beset our politicians now filled the minds of

legislators in England then. The same arguments and logic and prophecy prevailed. In Parliament the Duke of Richmond indignantly asked whether the right honorable gentleman at the head of the government thought that the farmers and tailors and shoemakers would consent to foreign articles coming in free of duty. Lord Ashburton admitted that free trade was a beautiful hypothesis, but it must result in perfect ruin. "Besides, the question was, after all, one of labor. The workman on the shores of the Baltic in Germany was paid sixpence a day, and the workman in England two shillings a day; and yet it was proposed to benefit the latter by bringing him into direct competition with the former." Mr. P. Miles, an authority on trade subjects, said, "Free trade means this: that all foreign nations are to have the power of inundating our shores with their products, but we shall have no corresponding advantage in return. The manufacturers of this country will find it difficult to compete with foreigners unless they reduce wages."

Nevertheless, the duties were removed, and none of these predicted calamities followed. The wheels of industry revolved anew, manufacturers multiplied, wages increased, opportunities for employment widened, the inundation of cheapness enriched the people, and the ill-paid workmen on the Baltic could not compete with the better paid, and therefore cheaper, labor of England. Pauperism decreased and crime diminished in consequence of the new order of things, and the deposits in the savings banks augmented wonderfully. And, better than all, the consumption of the necessary articles of food per capita increased remarkably. It is Justin McCarthy who assures us that "they who were the uncompromising opponents of free trade at that time are proud to call themselves its uncompromising zealots now. Indeed, there is no more chance of a reaction against free trade in England than there is of a reaction against the rule of three."

Returning to our own country, we study the question of wages here. We do not seek for theories, but for facts. We anxiously try to see how many of the great army of American laborers are affected by the tariff. Out of 17,392,099 in 1880, it is not claimed that over 2,623,089 are employed in the manufacturing industries, for whose benefit a population of over 50,000,000 is taxed. Accordingly, we look for the exceptional wages that such wage-earners must receive.

Otherwise what use is the tariff to them, if it does not give them its great advantage? Certainly, they who find employment in woollen and cotton mills, in iron furnaces and in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, should be happy and prosperous. Here, at least, is to be found a partial justification for the taxes we benevolently pay.

Again we are astounded. No psalms of content or thanksgiving arise from these labor districts, but demonstrations of discontent instead. Wages and capital are at odds, and strikes are frequent. Hostile combinations are resorted to by each side. To our surprise the conditions of life are hard. A paradox confronts us. We discover that protection has failed to fill the pockets of the employers, so that a portion of its gracious blessings may overflow into the pockets of the employed. Alas! the lowest wages paid in this great republic must content these toilers. In Minnesota and Iowa, whose unfortunate laborers come in direct competition with the pauper labor of Europe, the highest wages are paid. There we hear of no strikes or notes of discontent. The employer and employed are friends, and the laborer more often enjoys the independence of his own home. It is the tenement houses that shelter the "protected."

Your honorable colleague, Senator Chace of Rhode Island, is one who lifts his voice in behalf of protecting American labor, whose welfare he has at heart, and whose condition he extols. His gifted cousin, living among the operatives of his employ, has pictured to us in her notable and pathetic stories the actual existence of mill hands. Pardon us if we accept the realistic rather than the fanciful view of the case. The city of Holyoke is a protection stronghold. The same excuse for the tariff tax, that it protects American labor, obtains there. It matters not that such labor has largely been compelled to give way to the cheaper service of the French Canadian. A lower type of living prevails; and, when the annual ballot on license is taken, you may count on Holyoke's voting "yes" by a large majority.

Wherever and whenever the protected manufacturer of New England can reduce the price of labor by importation, whether from Canada or Great Britain, he does not hesitate. In view of these facts, which lack the glow and color of ideal theories, tell us wherein we are wrong when we assert that labor is the one commodity that is unprotected in this country? Deprived of a single benefit

in the way of increased wages, it has no power to escape the heavy taxation that bears more heavily upon its shoulders than upon any other class. It is this discrimination against labor which makes the tariff odious to us.

Pardon the triteness of these observations, and deem them not disrespectful to your intelligence. Perhaps you can expose the fallacy which eludes us who are honestly trying to grasp it.

A generation of voters has grown to manhood since the war. Adhering to the Republican party as the party of great ideas and principles, many of the young men pause in consternation at its seeming neglect of both. They have waited in the hope that the key-note of a fresh campaign, based on live issues, would emanate from the old camp of freedom. At last they recognize its revivifying sound; but it comes, strangely, from the quarter where oppression was wont to be intrenched. Although bewildered, they cannot follow leaders who, while dealing in glorious memories, are blind to the demands of the time. It is impossible for them not to honor a President who transcends his party, nor can they affect respect for the shifty and meretricious politicians, whose predominant instinct is to side with popular prejudice, unmindful of the invisible currents of conscience.

I have confined myself, with purpose, to a single point of the discussion, because it is the humane garb with which rapacity seeks to disguise itself. Every industry drawing its tribute from the people will protest with fervor against diminishing the dangerous treasury surplus by abating protective duties, and urge the importance of wiping out instead the revenue taxes. The law which covers into the treasury the bulk of its exactions—taking from the people to return to the people—is to be made obnoxious. The law which legislates the tax from the consumer's to the producer's pocket must be preserved in the abused name of labor.

I beg to express the hope that, with the issue defined, you will be led to re-examine your grounds of opposition to commercial freedom. Nor is it easy to believe that you can advocate a cause which is solely selfish, and does not represent a virtue or an idea to the human race.

Yours with sincere respect,

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

AN OPEN LETTER TO SENATOR HOAR.
THE ETHICAL VIEW OF PROTECTION AND FREE TRADE.

[*Boston Post*, Tuesday, October 30, 1888.]

Dear Sir,—I read with interest the *Boston Journal's* report of your speech to the workmen last Thursday in Faneuil Hall. Your comparison of English and American workmen and their different ways of living, and your assumption that the tariff tax accounts for the better conditions here, need no comment. Such appeals are to prejudice, and not to reason, and may be left to answer themselves.

But your personal allusion to my views regarding the ethics of protection will excuse a comment on that head. I quote your words as reported :—

Mr. Garrison, an excellent and worthy man, whom I respect, tells you that the protective tariff is unchristian, because, even if it does do all these things for us, you ought to open your doors, and let the pauper laborers of Europe have a share in your benefits. [Laughter.] We will do it if they will come over here. If an Englishman, a skilled English laborer, a good, honest man, with his wife and children, wants to make your coat, he is welcome to do it; but he must come over here, and make it [applause],—that is all. This world-wide philanthropy, this new Christian doctrine, does not commend itself to my judgment; and Saint Paul said, "He that provideth not for his own household is worse than an infidel." [Great applause.]

The "great applause" which followed this indicates that the hit was a palpable one. I venture with modesty therefore to ask of you an explanation of its force. I am totally unable to see why the skilled English laborer who wants to make my coat should be obliged to come over here to do it. What difference does it make to me whether he lives in London or in Worcester? It is the coat that I care about, and not the residence. Labor is not lessened in America because of my ordering that coat in England. It has to be paid for with something produced here which takes an equivalent of labor to produce. We simply exchange services, which are as beneficial to the country when between foreigners as between neighbors. If the English coat is paid for by American shoes, why is not shoemaking equivalent to tailoring; and how does native industry suffer by the division of labor and exchange of products which mark

the progress of civilization? Pray, what has residence to do with the matter at all? If I can get my coat cheaply in London, why do you wrong me by putting a tax on it to make it costly? It is absurd to say that the reason is to create labor here. It would be impossible for me to buy that coat if some one on this side had not made something else to pay for it.

Saint Paul has often been quoted to cover wrongs. His sending back Onesimus made American slavery a Christian institution. His dislike to women's speaking in meeting is considered a crushing argument against women's rights. But are you doing justice to the apostle in your interpretation of the text? You imply that Saint Paul considered a man an infidel whose sympathies were large enough to extend beyond his threshold. I think he meant only to rebuke the man who neglected his family, which was a just remonstrance; and your use of the quotation lacks relevancy. Upon your interpretation the beautiful and pious Fénelon was an infidel. He said, "I prefer my family to myself, my country to my family, and the human race to my country." Let me suggest a better text from Saint Paul: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth."

You say further:

Take one of Mr. Garrison's speeches, and then see whether you can find, if his doctrine is true, any argument for having a country at all, whether the great sentiment of patriotism must not die out under his teachings, whether you will be permitted any longer to love the old flag and to have your heart warmed to the stars and stripes, and have a feeling of equal love and affection for the Union Jack or the double-headed eagle of Austria or some Malay piratical red flag. [Applause.] O fellow-citizens, we have not learned that doctrine, either of Christianity or of patriotism, from the men who have given Faneuil Hall its fame. This continent of ours, with its imperial race who are to be hereafter the leaders and enlighteners of the world, with its thirty-eight States, with its 60,000,000 of free men, is large enough for all the human love my bosom is capable of holding [applause], or, if not, I will at least wait till I have done my full duty to that before I proceed to slop over the rest of the world. [Applause.]

Is it true that my doctrine leads to a disregard of country or that it inculcates "an equal love for the double-headed eagle of Austria or some piratical red flag"? Is such language spoken in soberness, or must it be justified by the exigencies of a presidential campaign? It certainly adds no fame to Faneuil Hall.

I can remember when nobler words were spoken there from the lips of an Englishman in behalf of American freedom,—George Thompson,—a suggestive contrast to the recreant Englishman you introduced, who came to depict the miseries of his fellow-countrymen, and, without sympathy for them, besought us not to advocate a policy of trade which would benefit his suffering comrades. The name of Thomas Paine ought to have some standing in the old “Cradle of Liberty”; but he said: “The world is my country. To do good is my religion.” And Dr. Channing, the founder of the sect you are proud to be numbered with, uttered these “sentimental” words: “I call that mind free that sets no bounds to its love; which is not imprisoned in itself or in sect; which recognizes in all human beings the image of God and the rights of his children; . . . and offers itself a willing victim to the cause of mankind.” And Henry Ward Beecher would not have been out of place on the historical platform from which you spoke. Listen to his sentiment: “As a father stands in the midst of his household, and says, ‘What is best for my children?’ so we are to stand in the world, and say, ‘What is best for my brotherhood?’”

And your human love is limited to “thirty-eight States and 60,000,000 freemen”! Love, then, is a question of geography and numbers. Had you been born in Italy, your sympathies would have been confined to that peninsula. But Terence was a Roman, and the world keeps his name undying for one “sentimental” declaration: “I am a man; and nothing that pertains to humanity is foreign to my sympathies.” And Seneca was not ashamed to say: “We are members of one great body, and we must consider that we were born for the good of the whole. . . . I will look upon the whole world as my country.” And Epictetus takes up the chorus: “The universe is but one great city, full of beloved ones, divine and human, by nature endeared to each other.” And I could summon a later and not less worthy spirit whose memory belongs to the world, Joseph Mazzini, whose absorbing love for Italy never allowed him to forget his black brothers in American chains.

I might imagine you born in Greece and uttering such sentiments as I have cited in the days of the Academy, and let Plato rebuke you for your ignoble speech. I might conceive you a native of the Emerald Isle, and then contrast your narrow patriotism with O’Con-

nell's noble declaration that, whatever became of Ireland, he never would be silent regarding American slavery. And France would bring you face to face with Lafayette, whose patriotism embraced America, and who would not be out of place, even in Faneuil Hall ; and with Victor Hugo, who stretched his hand of sympathy across the ocean to John Brown at Harper's Ferry. And English Herbert Spencer reminds us that "the moral law is cosmopolite,— is no respecter of nationalities, and between men who are the antipodes of each other, either in locality or anything else, there must still exist the same balance of rights as though they were next-door neighbors in all things." Even heathenism is broader than the Christianity you profess. Confucius, whose countrymen, to your lasting honor, were not shut out of this great republic by your vote, tells us that "the good man loves all men," and that the "mean man sows, that himself or his friends may reap, but the love of the perfect man is universal." "Love all mankind equally," says the Buddhist commandment ; and I might summon a mighty cloud of witnesses to the sublimity of that universal brotherhood at which you affect to sneer.

I once heard from your lips a reverential expression for a citizen of Massachusetts, whose intense devotion to his family led him to love the entire human race. Of his first-born he wrote :—

" Bone of my bone ! not all Golconda's gold
Is worth the value of a hair of thine ! "

adding,—

" Yet no more precious than the meanest slave ! "

In his day and generation the business interests of Boston decried him, and the Pauline epithet of "infidel" was hurled against him. And great Massachusetts senators in Faneuil Hall appealed to men's lowest instincts to crush out his zeal. While the old State House stands, it will recall the mob that sought his life. But to-day, on the noblest avenue of the city, is an effigy in bronze bearing the name of this despised and hated man. Engraved upon the pedestal of stone the passer reads, not your quotation from Saint Paul, but these simple words : "My country is the world ; my countrymen are all mankind."

Faithfully yours,

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

GARRISON TO HOAR.

REPLY TO SENATOR HOAR'S ARGUMENT THAT SLAVERY AND
FREE TRADE ARE OF KINDRED NATURE.—ABOLITIONISTS
NATURALLY FREE TRADERS.

[*New York Evening Post*, November 25, 1891.]

HON. GEORGE F. HOAR :

Dear Sir,—In your speech at Tremont Temple last Thursday evening, in company with Mr. McKinley, you stated that among the men who petitioned Congress in favor of the Tariff Bill in 1828 “was William Lloyd Garrison, then in the flower and vigor of his youth,” and added, “We may well claim that that is sound, wise, safe, humane Massachusetts policy, for the interest of the workingman and the employer, of the poor and rich alike, in regard to which William Lloyd Garrison, Daniel Webster, and John Quincy Adams agreed.”

The impression left upon the minds of your hearers and the subsequent readers of your address was a misleading one. No suggestion of Mr. Garrison's early and radical change of opinion on the protective system can be inferred from your language. For the sake of partisan effect you apparently “remembered to forget” its mention. Had your purpose been to render individual justice or to preserve historical truth, you could hardly have let your statement stand without explanation. Technically true, like many protective facts, it has the force of an untruth. It befits the legal pleader, but not the honored Senator of a great State.

I ask respectfully what would be your characterization of a public speaker who, denouncing woman suffrage, should yet quote my father on his side, because “in the flower and vigor of his youth,” at the same time to which you refer, he was shocked because seven hundred women of Pittsburg, Pa., petitioned Congress in behalf of Indian rights? Although in full sympathy with their object, Mr. Garrison declared the petition “uncalled for interference,” and “out of place,” and that he “should be sorry to have the practice become general.” Or how would you rate the honesty of an orator advocating orthodox theology who should say that it was “sound, wise, safe, humane,” because William Lloyd Garrison, “in the flower and

vigor of his youth," denounced Jefferson and Paine for their "infidelity," and lamented because a fête was given to Lafayette in France on the Sabbath?

You, sir, were aware, as most of your audience were not, that upon many vital questions, including protection, my father's opinions, in the process of his development, underwent a revolution. You will find recorded in his latest biography that an eminent townswoman of your own, Mrs. Abby Kelly Foster, once playfully confronted him with an earlier utterance conflicting with his present belief, to which he rejoined manfully, "Whereas I was blind, now I see." And you have chosen to quote with authority sentiments spoken by him in his confessed days of blindness, wilfully omitting to state that they were spurned and repudiated by him in his days of light. Is the cause of restriction and oppression for which you plead so desperate that its advocates are forced to such disingenuous methods to give it a seeming respectability?

In case you should repeat your speech, permit me modestly to submit the following addition to it, which, if possibly open to the objection that it is "bad politics," is counterbalanced by the fact that it illustrates good morals:—

It is true, fellow-citizens, that, in the "flower and vigor" of Mr. Garrison's youth, he publicly acknowledged in his newspaper (July 14, 1827), "I do not pretend to much information on this subject"; but bear in mind that, a year later (Oct. 2, 1828), he declared editorially in the *Journal of the Times* (at the flowery and vigorous age of twenty-three): "We are friends, even to enthusiasm, to what is significantly styled the American system. Every day's experience teaches this whole people that their interests are best promoted by the erection of national houses of industry." Exactly our position, gentlemen. But, fellow-protectionists, candor compels me to add that in the faded flower and feebleness of his manhood, persisting even to his maturest and latest days, Mr. Garrison held and advocated an entirely opposite opinion. As I account for the falling from the faith in these days by the pernicious influence of Harvard College, I am inclined to find a motive for his apostasy in friendly association with those English arch free traders (and unfaltering friends of the United States) George Thompson, Harriet Martineau, and John Bright. He had imbibed the curious idea that humanity was larger than a nation, and that reciprocal relations are not affected by geographical lines.

Painful as it may be to all our feelings, and calculated as it is to "throw a coldness" over our meeting, nobility demands that, having touched upon a brief and fleeting period of Mr. Garrison's long career, I should exhibit his later views

upon this question, tenaciously adhered to during the important part of his life. I shall therefore conclude by two liberal quotations from his utterances at the age of sixty-three, forty years having elapsed since my first quotation, a sufficient time in which to account for the withered flower and the lack of vigor. I shall first call your attention to some extracts from Mr. Garrison's speech in Boston, as reported in the *Boston Journal* of April 21, 1869, when the distinguished speaker was a vice-president of the American Free Trade League of New York:

"The cause of human liberty covers and includes all possible forms of human industry, and best determines how the productions thereof may be exchanged at home and abroad to mutual advantage. Though never handling a tool, nor manufacturing a bale of cotton or wool, nor selling a yard of cloth or a pound of sugar, he is the most sagacious political economist who contends for the highest justice, the most far-reaching equality, a close adherence to natural laws, and the removal of all those restrictions which foster natural pride and selfishness. The mysteries of government are only the juggles of usurpers and demagogues. There is nothing intricate in freedom, free labor, free institutions, the law of interchange, the measure of reciprocity. It is the legerdemain of class legislation, disregarding the common interests of the people, that creates confusion, sophisticates the judgment, and dazzles to betray. The law of gravitation needs no legislative props or safeguards to make its operations more effective or more beneficent. . . . Believing that the interests of the American people in no wise differ materially from those of the people of any other country, and denying the rectitude or feasibility of building ourselves up at their expense by an exclusive policy, obstructing the natural flow of material exchanges, I avow myself to be a radical free trader, even to the extent of desiring the abolition of all custom-houses, as now constituted, throughout the world. That event is far distant, undoubtedly; but I believe it will come with the freedom and enlightenment of mankind. My faith is absolute that it will prove advantageous to every branch of human industry, whether at home or abroad."

Again, in the *New York Independent* of May 20, 1869, Mr. Garrison thus irreverently treated our sacred system of protection:—

"The protection of American labor has a taking sound, but it really means the restriction and taxation of that labor. Protection against what? Have we not the best educated and most intelligent population on earth? And does not this imply industry, thrift, skill, enterprise, invention, capital, beyond any other forty millions of people? Have we not muscles as well as brains? Have we not a country unrivalled in the variety and abundance of its natural productions and the abounding riches of its mineral resources? What more need we to claim or ought we to have? If, in an open field, we cannot successfully compete with 'the cheap and pauperized labor of Europe,' in all that is necessary to our comfort, or even to our luxury, then let us go to the wall. Was the slave labor of the South at all a match for the free labor of the North? In which section of the Union was industry best protected or wealth most augmented? Is it

not ludicrous to read what piteous calls are made for the protection of the strong against the weak, of the intelligent against the ignorant, of the well-fed against the half starving, of our free republican nation against the effete governments of the Old World, in all that relates to the welfare of the people? With all that God has done for us, in giving us such a goodly heritage, cannot we contrive to live without erecting barriers against the freest intercourse with all nations? Must we guard our ports against the free importation of hemp, iron, broad-cloth, silk, coal, etc., as though it were a question of quarantine for the small-pox or Asiatic cholera? Refusing to do so, will the natural consequences be 'vacant factories, furnaces standing idle, the shops of manufacturing industry closed, labor begging and starving for want of employment,' and all the other fearful results that are so confidently predicted by the advocates of the protective policy, falsely so called? Similar predictions were made by the defenders of Southern slavery in regard to the abolition of that nefarious system, and in order to subject to popular odium those who demanded the immediate and unconditional emancipation of the oppressed. Freedom, as well as wisdom, is justified of her children, and in proportion as she bears sway will it go well with any people."

I hardly dare hope for such corrective speech from your biassed lips, but respectfully submit the above mode of treatment, and subscribe myself, yours for fair play and free trade,

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON.

SPEECH OF WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON AT UPTON,
MASS., JANUARY 23, 1895.

CONCERNING SENATOR HOAR'S SPEECH AT THE DINNER OF THE
HOME MARKET CLUB.

It was a matter of chance, and not of design, that Worcester County has been chosen for this first lecture under the auspices of the New England Free Trade League. There is, however, a peculiar fitness in the choice; for it is the home of one of the most distinguished and persistent advocates of the protective system, Senator Hoar. Presumably, the county is in sympathy with his ideas on the subject. Therefore, it needs especially to have the gospel of free trade preached with simplicity and force. By using as an example a representative public man like the Senator of Massachusetts, I can perhaps better illustrate my theme, and make clearer to your minds

the fundamental differences separating the parties engaged in the "irrepressible conflict" now waging. By parties I do not mean strictly political parties, the recent action of a controlling portion of the Democrats in Congress showing that, so far from being free traders or even tariff reformers, they are pronounced protectionists. As between Senator Gorman and Governor McKinley, the former is much more to be feared by free traders than the latter. The real parties engaged in the conflict are those who defend protection and those who would exterminate it, root and branch. I am acquainted with free traders in the Republican party and with many protection Democrats.

I shall endeavor to speak of Mr. Hoar with courtesy and respect, due alike to his high character and to his office, although it is a question whether a senatorial office can at this time be called an exalted position. But, for his public utterances and his partisan attitude, I shall aim to make my language unmistakable. He has furnished me a text in his speech at the dinner of the Home Market Club, held in Boston last November. To avoid the charge of intruding my personality, let me say that the senator referred to me by name to point his own remarks.

It is always difficult to discuss a question of science or morals with one who cannot see that truth is unaffected by the attitude of any party or the opinion of a majority. It is not, therefore, pertinent to answer an economical argument with the retort that your opponent belongs to an unsavory political organization. For a lawyer bound to win his case by appealing to the prejudices of the jury, such tactics may appear justifiable. For a great senator, representing what used to be considered the most intelligent and moral State in the Union, this method is hardly worthy the traditions of his office. The imperative social questions confronting the American people are not to be settled by a sneer, but deserve that thoughtful and respectful consideration which the gravity of the situation demands.

I trust it will be considered no disrespect to Senator Hoar to say that, in treating seriously his utterances on economic subjects, one is forced to impeach either his intelligence or his sincerity. I cannot question his upright motives, and am forced, therefore, to accept the first alternative. Let us examine and test some of his declara-

tions. He says: "Organized wealth neither needs nor asks protection. It is the workman in the shop, it is the wage-earner in the mill, it is the journeyman starting in his little mercantile or manufacturing business with his little savings, who has reaped, as all the history of New England shows, the benefit of the protective system."

Is not the fair inference to be drawn from this statement that we owe the enactment of protective tariffs to the demands of the working people? And Mr. Hoar has lived at Washington, has met the representatives of the Sugar Trust,—a colossal instance of organized wealth,—of the woollen manufacturers, of the cotton mills, of the iron interests, of the coal barons, of every wealthy protected industry in the country, and *never* a genuine representative of the laborers of New England.

"Organized wealth neither needs nor asks protection." I agree with the senator. It does not need it nor ask for it: it commands it. At what a fearful price it is exacted! Corrupt bargaining, bribery, direct and indirect, public and private dishonor, political demoralization, debased legislatures, low standards, the dry rot of the republic. And the senator, sitting in a body which typifies all these symptoms of decay, has no eyes that can discern organized wealth!

There was once a noble representative of Massachusetts, whose name the Commonwealth preserves with pride for his service to education and his fidelity to freedom,—Horace Mann. He was a member of Congress in 1850, when organized wealth forced itself upon his notice. It was then a shadow no bigger than a man's hand,—compared with the clouds that darkened Washington in the days when McKinley framed his bill,—and at the sight of these opulent beggars Horace Mann was shocked and disheartened. "It is truly appalling," he wrote, "to see the swarms of men who come on here from the North,—and a full proportion of them are from Massachusetts,—to re-enforce the interests of the manufacturers,—cotton, woollen, and iron particularly. Oh, if there were such alacrity, such zeal, such effort, for what is good! But, though I have no doubt such a state of society will come some time, yet that time is a great way off. If it is, then why should not we try to bring it nearer, as we may do?" Forty-five years have passed since then, and we who are striving in the spirit of Horace Mann to wipe

out the infamy are food for the mirth of Massachusetts' leading senator!

As regards wage-earners in the mill and the workman in his shop, if Mr. Hoar will inform himself on the rate of wages paid in the protected industries of the country, he will see how they reap the benefit of the high tariff. They are never quoted when it is desired to compare the condition of our laboring people with those of Great Britain. On the contrary, the wages of unprotected workers are always cited, and then disingenuously compared with the poorest paid abroad. Nor dare any protectionist make a public comparison of the wages of free-trade England with those of the protected countries of the continent. They cannot discuss economics, and are only politicians in the guise of economists.

When prejudices against England are sufficiently aroused, the South is the next weapon to use against free traders. Free trade is wrong, because colored voters are intimidated and lynched in the Southern States. There must be a sequence, and there is. It is purely a political one.

Whenever Mr. Hoar has occasion to allude to me, his hearers are left with the impression that, as the son of an abolitionist, I have strayed far away from the principles of my father. The evidence of my dereliction is that "the region of free trade, the region of disloyalty, the region of lawlessness and crime, are the regions, and the only regions," where the doctrines of the Free Trade League have thus far found any considerable footing. Aside from the distortion of facts, a close connection between slavery and free trade is assumed; and an implication is made that the abolitionists were protectionists, and the slaveholders naturally free traders.

If, instead of such misleading and unjust treatment of the sons of many abolitionists, who differ from the Republican party on this issue, the senator had stated the case as he knows it to be, the effect of his criticism would have been opposite from the one intended. It was said of John Stuart Mill that, when he had occasion to debate a question, he was so careful to state impartially the adverse side that his opponent was surprised at the strength of his own case. His biographer naturally emphasizes this noble trait. In a similar spirit, Mr. Hoar might have substituted for his Home Market Club talk something in this line: "Gentlemen, I regret that Mr. Garrison

cannot see the blessings of protection as we do ; but candor compels me to say that he comes naturally by his faith. His father was an outspoken and radical free trader, as you will see by consulting Volume 4th, Chapter 9, of his biography, written by his children. In 1869 the veteran abolitionist was the vice-president of the American Free Trade League of New York, and then declared, 'I avow myself to be a radical free trader, even to the extent of desiring the abolition of all custom-houses, as now constituted, throughout the world.'" If the senator's reasoning is right in my case, it follows that my father was a coadjutor of the slaveholders,—a *reductio ad absurdum*.

By the same token Ralph Waldo Emerson, whom Mr. Hoar admires and quotes, was affiliated with Southern oppression. Let me suggest this extract from his essay on Wealth, for the senator's quotation at the next meeting of the Home Market Club. It contains more truth and wisdom than the combined speeches at the last dinner, including that of the new protection ally from New Orleans, Mr. Parkerson, who led the Mafia lynching in that city, and who does not disguise his views on present white supremacy. The words of Emerson are these: "The basis of political economy is non-interference. The only safe rule is to be found in the self-adjustment of demand and supply. Do not legislate. Meddle, and you snap the sinews with your sumptuary laws ; give no bounties ; make equal laws ; secure life and property, and you need give no alms. . . . The level of the sea is not more surely kept than is the equilibrium of value in society by the demand and supply ; and artifice or legislation punishes itself by reactions, gluts, and bankruptcies. The sublime laws play indifferently through atoms and galaxies." The Home Market Club is organized to defy these universal laws, and the contract is a large one.

Amasa Walker was an old Free Soiler, a lover of liberty and a hater of Southern oppression. In 1869 he published an economic work, "The Science of Wealth." If the senator will consult the chapter on Exchange, he will learn something to his advantage. It will enable him to state why New England is for protection and the South for free trade. Lest he neglect to follow my advice, I will quote an extract from Amasa Walker's book. He says: "It will, doubtless, be a matter of profound astonishment to the future histo-

rian that a people who had a free and untrammelled industry, with natural advantages for the most productive agriculture in the world and for the legitimate growth of every kind of manufacture, should ever have asked for restrictions upon trade. But, in truth, they did not ask for protection at the outset. It was forced upon them by politicians, irrespective of their wishes, for the avowed purpose of securing a home market for *cotton*.

“All New England was opposed to the policy, and protested against it; yet it was carried. Special forms of manufacture were brought into existence; and, as these were sickly and needed all the help they could obtain from government, an interested party was formed, which clamored incessantly for protection. Yet it was not until the third tariff, that of 1824, had gone into operation that the Northern and Central States became the partisans of protection. As New England was the last to consent to restrictive legislation, so she will undoubtedly be the first to ask for its abandonment. No policy could be more adverse to her permanent interests. She has natural advantages for manufacturing. With these she can carry them on successfully. By high protective duties other sections will be led to introduce the same branches of industry, and she will find her severest competition at home; while all parts of the nation will be crippled by a false system, equally against the laws of nature and value, since protection, as previously shown, puts the bad on a level with the good, and destroys all natural tests of usefulness in production.” And I could quote uncompromising free-trade sentiments from Henry Ward Beecher and James Freeman Clarke, pronounced advocates of anti-slavery.

New England, then, became protective at the behest of Southern slaveholders, to enlarge the market for their cotton. As Walker shows, in 1816, New England opposed the tariff. The South advocated it. Lowndes, of South Carolina, reported the bill, and Calhoun supported it. In 1824 the South, realizing that, because of slavery, protection could not foster manufactures there, and it would have to give more cotton in exchange for dearer goods, reversed its position, and antagonized the tariff. Then the Middle and Western States foisted the odious tariff upon New England. As John Randolph said, “The merchants and manufacturers of Massachusetts and New Hampshire repel this bill, while men in hunting-shirts,

with deerskin leggings and moccasins on their feet, want protection for home manufactures.”

It would have been an anomaly to find men advocating free speech, free soil, and free men, balking at the inevitable corollary, free trade. The same law of natural selection held in Great Britain; and, if you name the men and women who were foremost in the West India emancipation and in friendliness to the North in the Civil War, you cannot leave out the names of the great free traders, George Thompson, Richard Cobden, John Bright, Harriet Martineau, John Stuart Mill, Professor Cairnes, and a multitude of lesser philanthropists. I take the trouble to place these facts before our senator, hoping that his manliness will one day persuade him to reconstruct his historical theory, and atone for his partisan misleading.

A single point more. In the speech referred to Mr. Hoar said, alluding to the new Free Trade League: “Mr. Garrison says they hitch their wagon to a star. It may be. But it is a falling star, which will go out in darkness and sorrow.” The senator’s vision is again at fault. Milton describes it better:—

“So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.”

The cause of freedom follows the order of the planets. Its eclipses are but momentary. No petty election, no senatorial betrayal of trust, can for a moment retard the imperial progress of the reform which other senators must ere long be forced to consummate. It is an inexpressible regret to us who know and appreciate the great qualities of Senator Hoar that, instead of standing as the champion of free trade, he should in his later days ally himself with the country’s curse, and “to party give up what was meant for mankind.”

